

Affordable Health Care

*for you, your family
and our future
generations...*



Congressman Gil Gutknecht

*First District, Minnesota
Summer 2003*



Addressing the rising cost of health care...

Health care we cannot afford serves no purpose.

In our current session of Congress, I am pursuing two common-sense solutions that can make health care more affordable for all Americans.

Expanding Medical Savings Accounts (MSAs) and opening the prescription drug market are two ways we can start to make real progress during this era of rising health care costs.

Read on to learn more. As always, please contact me with further questions or if I can be of service to you and your family.

Medical Savings Accounts

Congressman Gutknecht speaks at a news conference regarding Medical Savings Accounts after meeting with members of the Minneapolis Fire Department to learn how MSAs could help them.



Medical Savings

Accounts (MSAs) are a way to offer Americans more health care options. MSAs allow *you* to be part of purchase decisions.

How does it work?

I recently introduced, together with most of the Minnesota delegation, the 'Minnesota MSA Empowerment Act' (HR 1670). It authorizes an MSA pilot program for Minnesota's public employees. Under this bill, Minnesota public employees AND their state pensions could contribute to the MSA. These contributions would be tax-free, allowing the public employees to pay for health care services not covered by their insurance deductibles. After retirement, participants may spend their MSA money for long-term care or other needs.

All Minnesota workers deserve affordable, quality health care, especially after they retire. Allowing folks to plan and save for health care tax-free is an exciting new proposal. I'll keep you posted on the status of this pilot program.

Prescription Drug Market Access

For too long, our federal government has stood between Americans and affordable prescription drugs.

I have a plan to open markets. Conservative estimates suggest (see chart) we can save a minimum of *35-percent* on prescription drugs.

Seniors will spend \$1.8 trillion on prescription drugs over the next ten years. Simple arithmetic demonstrates that we could allow Americans to keep more than \$600 billion over the next ten years.

How can we see such savings?

By allowing markets to work for you.

"A drug you cannot afford is neither safe nor effective."

-Dr. Steve Schondelmeyer
Pharm.D., PhD, University of Minnesota
PRIME Institute

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Conversations with the Congressman:

Gil's weekly radio show where you can tune in - and call in - for the latest news, and

As you can see from the chart below, common prescription drugs are 30 - 300 percent *cheaper* in Europe and Canada.

Comparison of U.S., European and Canadian Drug Prices

DRUG	U.S. PRICE	EUROPEAN PRICE	CANADIAN PRICE
Augmentin	\$55.50	\$8.75	\$12.00
Cipro	\$87.99	\$40.75	\$53.55
Coumadin	\$64.88	\$15.80	\$24.94
Glucophage	\$124.65	\$22.00	\$26.47
Norvasc	\$67.00	\$33.00	\$46.27
Paxil	\$83.29	\$49.00	\$44.35
Pravachol	\$85.60	\$29.00	\$40.00
Premarin	\$55.42	\$8.95	\$22.46
Prempro	\$31.09	\$5.75	\$14.33
Prilosec	\$112.00	\$49.25	\$59.00
Synthroid	\$33.93	\$8.50	\$13.22
Zestril	\$40.49	\$20.00	\$20.44
Zocor	\$123.43	\$28.00	\$45.49
Zoloft	\$114.56	\$52.50	\$47.40

Source: Life Extension Network, 2002

If the pharmaceutical companies already safely import prescription drugs, why can't you? Opening markets is the answer.

This year, I will again work to allow the importation of FDA-approved drugs from FDA-approved facilities. Americans deserve world-class prescription drugs at world market prices.

Congressman Gutknecht speaks with residents of Ridgeway on German Senior Living Center in New Ulm regarding open markets and lower prescription drug costs.





Congressman Gutknecht discusses seniors' issues with longtime television personality and Honorary Chairman of the United Seniors Association Art Linkletter. Gil regularly meets with seniors' groups to find common-sense solutions to today's health care concerns.

Affordable Health Care *for* All Americans



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M.C.

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